

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 086208
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-07 EB-08 L-03 AID-05 IO-13
PA-01 HA-05 /057 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CE N:DWELTER:NAB
APPROVED BY ARA: SASHELTON
ARA/CEN:EHICKS
LA/CEN:RRGARUFI
LA/CEN:RRLEON DE VIVERO
ARA:JBUSHNELL (SUBSTANCE)
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O 041819Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N.A.

TAGS: NU, SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE RE AID NUTRITION LOAN AND PVO
GRANTS

REFERENCE:

1. FOLLOWING HAS BEEN GIVEN TO PRESS SPOKESMAN APRIL 4
TO BE USED ONLY ON AN IF ASKED BASIS. IT IS TRANSMITTED
TO THE EMBASSY FOR BACKGROUND USE ONLY AT THIS TIME.
BEGIN TEXT:

IF ASKED:

Q. IS IT TRUE THAT THE U.S. HAS DECIDED TO PROVIDE NEW
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA?

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A. AID HAS NOTIFIED CONGRESS OF ITS INTENTION TO PROCEED
WITH A \$3.3 MILLION NUTRITION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR
NICARAGUA AND WITH FUNDING FOR THREE PROGRAMS BEING
CONDUCTED BY PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS IN NICARAGUA.
ALL OF THE PROGRAMS WOULD BENEFIT THE NEEDY IN NICARAGUA.

THE NUTRITION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (A \$3.0 MILLION LOAN AND

\$276,000 GRANT) IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE NUTRITION OF

NICARAGUA'S LOW-INCOME RURAL POPULATION. THESE ARE THE MOST POORLY NOURISHED OF NICARAGUA'S PEOPLE. CHILDREN UNDER FIVE AND PREGNANT AND NURSING WOMEN ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE ELEMENTS IN THIS GROUP. EXTREME VITAMIN AND MINERAL DEFICIENCIES (PARTICULARLY OF IODINE), WIDE-SPREAD INFESTATION BY PARASITES, AND OTHER PROBLEMS HAVE LED TO SEVERE HEALTH CONDITIONS FOR A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF NICARAGUA'S POPULATION.

THE NEW PROGRAM INCLUDES NUTRITION EDUCATION, PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF FORTIFIED AND HIGH PROTEIN FOODS, AND SPECIAL SERVICES FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN. IT IS EXPECTED TO BENEFIT DIRECTLY THOUSANDS OF INFANTS AND CHILDREN AND AN ESTIMATED 92,000 PREGNANT AND LACTATING WOMEN IN THE HIGHLANDS REGION. PARTICULAR PROJECTS WILL INCLUDE: PRODUCTION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL; SALT IODIZATION, DEVELOPMENT OF LOW-COST HIGH NUTRITION FOODS; PROVISION OF VITAMIN AND MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS; AND DEPARASITIZATION EFFORTS.

THE THREE PROGRAMS BEING CONDUCTED BY PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A \$60,000 GRANT TO THE NICARAGUAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
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FOR ITS "RURAL SMALL MERCHANT CREDIT UNIONS" PROJECT. THIS ON-GOING PROJECT, WHICH HAS RECEIVED AID ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST, INVOLVES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 15 CREDIT UNIONS IN RURAL TOWNS OF 2,000 TO 10,000 IN POPULATION. MEMBERSHIP WILL INCLUDE TRADESPEOPLE, ARTISANS AND THOSE WHO RUN HOME INDUSTRIES AND SERVICES. SLIGHTLY OVER HALF OF THE PARTICIPANTS ARE WOMEN.

THE SECOND GRANT IS FOR \$65,000 TO THE "REGIONAL EDUCATION RADIO PROJECT" OF THE WISCONSIN-NICARAGUA PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS. THIS IS ALSO AN ON-GOING PROJECT THAT HAS RECEIVED AID ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST. THE GRANT WOULD HELP FUND A REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL RADIO SERVICE FOR NORTHEASTERN NICARAGUA, EMPHASIZING HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND BASIC EDUCATION.

THE THIRD GRANT, FOR \$75,000 IS ALSO FOR THE WISCONSIN-NICARAGUA PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS. IT WOULD SUPPORT THE ON-GOING "EAST COAST REGIONAL HEALTH PROJECT" WHICH HAS ALSO RECEIVED AID ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST. IT WOULD HELP FUND REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICE FACILITIES IN 28 VILLAGES, EACH WITH A POPULATION OF LESS THAN 1,000

AND WITH AN ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME PER FAMILY OF \$75.

THE TWO PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING THESE GRANTS ARE INDEPENDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA.

IF ASKED:

Q. DOES THIS INDICATE U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE SOMOZA REGIME?

A. IN MAKING THESE GRANTS THAT RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF NICARAGUA'S POOR, THE U.S. REITERATES ITS POLICY OF STRICT NON-INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF NICARAGUA AND OUR CONTINUING DESIRE FOR A STEADY NON-VIOLENT TRANSITION TO GENUINE DEMOCRATIC RULE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF ASKED:

Q. IS IT TRUE THAT THESE ARE PROJECTS WHICH HAVE BEEN HELD UP BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN NICARAGUA?

A. WE HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF AID PROJECTS FOR NICARAGUA UNDER REVIEW IN LIGHT OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN NICARAGUA AND IN LIGHT OF THE TURMOIL FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO CHAMORRO IN JANUARY.

IF ASKED:

Q. WHY DID THE U.S. DECIDE TO GO AHEAD WITH THESE PROJECTS AT THIS TIME?

A. WE SIMPLY FELT THAT CONDITIONS IN NICARAGUA ARE SUCH THAT WE SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH THESE PROGRAMS FOR THE NEEDY. VANCE

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DRAFTED BY: ARA/CEN:DWELTER

APPROVED BY: ARA:SASHELTON

ARA/CEN:EHICKS

-----125911 131708Z /61

O 131625Z APR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 086208 ACTION MANAGUA APR 4

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 086208

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